

R E M A R K S

Claim 12 was amended to correct the dependency.

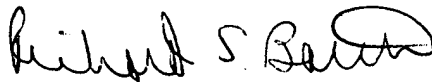
Claim 16, line 1 was amended to replace "apparatus" with --method--, since claim 16 depends on claim 15, which is a method claim.

Enclosed is a MARKED-UP VERSION OF THE AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS.

Entry of the above amendments is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner has any comments, questions, objections or recommendations, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the telephone number given below for prompt action.

Respectfully submitted,



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Enclosure: MARKED-UP VERSION OF THE AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

**MARKED-UP VERSION OF THE AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**  
**(SERIAL NO. 10/046,106)**

12. (Amended) The apparatus according to claim [9] 10,  
wherein the water breaking means comprises a water breaking roll.

16. (Amended) The [apparatus] method according to claim 15,  
wherein a clearance between the lowered water breaking means and  
the steel strip is maintained to be 1 to 10 mm.